Open for Business: FACE™ Goes Live

NAVAL AIR SYSTEMS COMMAND, PATUXENT RIVER, Md. — The Air Combat Electronics Program Office (PMA-209) recently announced a major milestone for the widespread adoption of Open Architecture standards within the Department of Defense (DoD): The Future Airborne Capability Environment (FACE) Conformance Program is open for business.

Members of the PMA-209 Avionics Architecture Team and other Naval Air Systems Command (NAVAIR) subject matter experts have been working with the Army, Air Force and over 90 DoD stakeholders and commercial companies, as well as Academia partners, since June 2010 to develop documentation and procedures to make the FACE Conformance Program a reality. With multiple editions of the FACE Technical Standard and other supporting documents already published, the procedural pieces were the last challenge before being able to make the announcement.

The FACE Conformance Program defines the processes to verify and certify that software products, known as FACE Units of Conformance (UoCs), fully meet all the requirements of the FACE Technical Standard. Once a UoC meets 100 percent of the FACE Technical Standard requirements, it can be certified "FACE Conformant." This formal recognition provides benefit to buyers and suppliers by supporting Better Buying Power (BBP) and Modular Open Systems Architecture (MOSA) requirements. To market an application as FACE conformant, it must receive a FACE Conformance Certificate. This certificate is obtained once a two-step process is completed. The first step is for a software supplier to submit a software component through an independent verification process. The technical verification must be performed by a designated Verification Authority (VA) and then the results are submitted to the FACE Certification Authority for the legal conformance certificate. The Naval Air Warfare Center Aircraft Division (NAWCAD) 5.4.3 Simulation Division is currently one of the four approved VAs. A full list of VAs is available at http://www.opengroup.org/face/approved-va.

Adopting the FACE Technical Standard for future software development efforts will give programs objective and repeatable methods of meeting Open Architecture guidance, as well as best practices called for by BBP and MOSA requirements, and Section 889 of the FY2016 National Defense Authorization Act. The FACE Technical Standard is a "standard of standards," founded on the ability to reuse portable software capabilities and reduce time to field through simplified integration and open application programming interfaces. The FACE Technical Standard can be applied to legacy and developmental systems, both at the outset and as technology is inserted and refreshed throughout the life-cycle of the system or platform.

Rear Adm. Shane Gahagan, assistant commander for Research and Engineering, NAVAIR, said, "With The Open Group's FACE Consortium Conformance Program now

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operational, NAVAIR can be assured FACE conformance requirements from our industry partners can be independently certified enabling NAVAIR to forge new partnerships in achieving rapid re-configurability through truly open technical standards. This enhanced competitive market will ensure an even more coordinated approach across NAVAIR's Software and Systems Engineering competencies with industry's leading experts in delivering innovative and affordable products to the Warfighter."

Vice Adm. Paul Grosklags, commander, NAVAIR, added, "NAVAIR is excited to congratulate The Open Group's FACE Consortium on their Conformance Program's 'Go-Live' announcement. A conformance mechanism ensures the FACE brand is protected and assures buyers they are procuring a reusable and truly open software application."

Rockwell Collins received the first FACE Conformance Certificate for its Required Navigation Performance / Area Navigation (RNP/RNAV) capable Mission Flight Management Software (MFMS). This certificate identifies the RNP/RNAV MFMS-1000 software product as conformant to the FACE Technical Standard Edition 2.1, the latest open architecture software standard for creating portable and reusable software. NAWCAD 5.4 was the VA requested to verify the software product was developed in accordance with the FACE Technical Standard.

To find out more about the FACE Conformance Program and how software can be certified, please visit http://www.opengroup.org/face/conformance. The FACE Conformance Policy, Conformance Certification Guide, and Technical Standard may be downloaded from The Open Group online bookstore, along with additional FACE publications, including the FACE Business Guide and Contract Guide.